

**MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG
AND MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2003**

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2003

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1, the Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act of 2003.

We're hearing a lot about the year 1965 today. Let me remind my colleagues of some of the other things from that year. Herb Alpert and Tijuana Brass won a Grammy for 'Album of the Year' and Tom Jones earned one as 'Best New Artist'. Sonny and Cher had a hit song in 'I Got You Babe' and 'Bonanza' was the top show on television. A postage stamp cost a nickel and a gallon of regular gasoline was 31 cents. And the Dow Jones Industrial Average reached a high of 969 points.

We've come a long way since then.

Also in 1965 Medicare, which has provided health care security for millions of Americans for almost 40 years, was created. When it was launched, the program was designed to focus on a different set of needs, needs that did not include prescription drug coverage and preventive care. It was designed to fit the needs of 1965.

Well my friends this isn't the mid-sixties anymore. Just as a postage stamp is no longer a nickel, the Medicare program which doesn't provide a prescription drug benefit doesn't work in today's world.

My friends, times change.

In 2003, we must honor our commitment of health care to seniors by ensuring that seniors have access and when needed assistance to prescription drug coverage. Additionally, H.R. 1 allows for other modernizations by adding an entry physical, cholesterol screening and offers disease management.

I am pleased that this bill works to address the needs of our rural communities. Long overlooked, H.R. 1 provides a permanent fix to formulas that have discriminated against health care providers in mid-Michigan and other rural areas. This is a policy change that goes to the heart of the problem and its benefits will be multiplied for years to come.

This legislation will increase to every small urban and rural hospital, equalizing their base payment rates with that of large urban hospitals. Additionally, H.R. 1 adds a five percent bonus for primary and specialty care physicians working in areas where such care is scarce; creating a new category of hospitals that are the primary hospital in the community to receive payments covering costs plus two percent; allowing rural and small-town hospitals that provide graduate medical education to receive additional direct medical education and indirect teaching hospital funds by moving unused residency slots to these hospitals; and adding a five percent increase for all rural home health agencies for two years.

Put simply, it is past time to modernize and improve the Medicare system. H.R. 1 will be able to better serve the needs of seniors. I urge my colleagues to support the passage of H.R. 1.

**RECOGNITION OF EDITH JAMES
AND SARAH LOCKHART**

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 8, 2003

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to recognize Edith James and Sarah Lockhart of Mt. Vernon, Illinois. Edith and Sarah recently led the Jefferson County African-American Heritage Committee's Research Committee in publishing the booklet, *We The People—Past Present and Future*, a look at local African-American history.

I thank and commend them for their tireless work in preserving and documenting history. Their work will lead to a better understanding of those who have come before us. It will also help to better educate us on one of the most divisive and shameful periods of American history: slavery and racial discrimination.

Edith and Sarah have spent much of their lives giving back to Jefferson County. I am honored to take this occasion to recognize them for their devotion and commitment to their community. We are grateful.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 24, 2003

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2555) making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes:

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 2555, the FY 2004 Homeland Security Appropriations Act.

The National Security Subcommittee, which I chair, has examined port security and found the volume of containerized cargo and the openness of our massive, complex port areas represent inviting vulnerabilities that must be secured.

Our ports are key commercial entry points, serving as the gateway for 95 percent of international cargo. Each year, nearly 10,000 vessels make 68,000 port calls and unload more than six million containers in the United States.

But, according to a GAO report published in August 2002, "Ports are inherently vulnerable to terrorist attacks because of their size, generally open accessibility by water and land, location in metropolitan areas, the amount of material being transported through ports, and the ready transportation links to many locations within our borders."

H.R. 2555 includes \$100 million for Transportation Safety Administration port security grants and \$61.7 million for the Container Security Initiative, which will help DHS protect what could be one of our Nation's most vulnerable access points—our ports. It is imperative that we adequately fund efforts by the Department of Homeland Security to scale-up port and container security.

I also support the funding in this legislation for State and local first responders. H.R. 2555 will provide \$4.4 billion for the Office of Domestic Preparedness, which includes \$1.9 billion for domestic preparedness formula grants and \$750 million for firefighter grants.

Before September 11, the firefighter grant program was funded at \$200 million, but the changes our nation has undergone since that horrific day have made clear the need for a dramatic increase in funding. This bill provides that increase.

The bottom line for me is our ports are still vulnerable and our first responders need strong financial support to protect our Nation. This bill provides significant assistance in both areas and strengthens national security.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to vote for this vital funding bill.

MR. JIM WITT

HON. C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 8, 2003

Mr. OTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and praise Jim Witt of Meridian, Idaho, for his steadfast commitment to safety. Mr. Witt is a professional truck driver who recently celebrated a remarkable career achievement: driving 1 million miles without a preventable accident. That's the equivalent of driving safely around the world 40 times.

Fatal accidents involving large trucks occur most frequently in rural areas like those throughout Idaho. On U.S. Highway 95—the major north-south route through my district—the long and tragic history of traffic fatalities is a constant reminder of the need to make highway safety foremost among our public policy considerations.

The U.S. Department of Transportation cites the danger posed by trucks on our highways as a growing concern for citizens. Professional, safety-conscious drivers like Mr. Witt provide an important public service as they navigate our corridors of commerce by helping to alleviate those concerns and setting an example for everyone who gets behind the wheel. I hope my House colleagues will join me in congratulating Mr. Witt and encouraging others to follow his lead in helping to make our roads safer.

**RECOGNITION OF MAJOR GENERAL
DAVID HARRIS**

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 8, 2003

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to recognize Major General David Harris, The Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard. Major General Harris will be retiring from his position after more than thirty-three years of military service.

Maj. General Harris was appointed Adjutant General in 1999. During his service as leader of the Illinois National Guard, he oversaw its largest mobilization since World War II. The military operations in Iraq saw more than 2,600 soldiers and airmen mobilized or alerted